

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
SARAH MILLER SMITH
BY CINDY HOLODNAK
FEBRUARY 27, 2014

Q. Hi, I'm Cindy Holodnak. Today is Thursday, February 27, 2014. I'm interviewing Sarah Miller Smith whose birth date is?

A. 7/24/29.

Q. Thank you so much for doing this. So you and two other women were the first cheerleaders to join the all-male squad [at OSU].

A. Right, and at that point in time, when we tried out, there were only two men. Ted Binder and Bob Copelan. The young girl who had petitioned many times to the Dean of Women - Dean Christine Conway - and to the Athletic Council to have women cheerleaders. And it was never considered. "No, we're not going to do that." When finally her persistence paid off.

Q. Was she one of the three of you?

A. That was the sad part. She was not, and she was the one who had worked so hard. Now one of the girls with me, I had known or met back in high school. I went to North High School and she went to Grandview High School. And that was at a time when we had sororities and fraternities in high school. The sorority that I was in in high school would have a spread with a group from Arlington or from Grandview. So I had met her. She's still around. She married Kent Brant, architect.

Q. What is her first name?

A. Jean. Her maiden was Chard and she married Kent Brandt. So the two of us are still around. I don't know what happened to the third girl. She was from out of town.

Q. So did that squad have three women and two men?

- A. That squad had three women but they upped the men to seven.
- Q. That year?
- A. That year.
- Q. So you didn't outnumber them. What year was this?
- A. 1947.
- Q. And did other universities have co-ed squads? Was Ohio State ahead of the pack, the middle of the pack, or behind the pack?
- A. No, we were probably among the first. I think Michigan had a yell squad. Dick Larkins was the Athletic Director at that point in time. Anyway, it was three and seven for a number of years. And then they finally went even, seven and seven. And now, don't quote me, but I cannot tell you how many they have now. It was at one point 64 [members], but the demands upon their time, for all the different sports and for appearing at Kiwanis, appearing at Notary, going to Children's Hospital, all of these activities. And seven men and seven women couldn't do it. It just didn't work that way.
- Q. What led you to want to pursue this? What year were you in school?
- A. I was a freshman.
- Q. You were a freshman. Oh gosh, okay. So did you cheer for four years then?
- A. Yes, I did. And I think there was an ad in the newspaper and I saw it. I was a cheerleader in high school. I was a dancer.
- Q. Did you realize it would be an issue?
- A. I didn't even think about it. Here was this ad. My parents said, "Would you be interested?" And I said, "It sounds kind of fun." So down I went with four or five hundred other girls.

- Q. So the tide was really turning then, if that many women showed up to try out.
- A. Oh absolutely. And that was the most who ever appeared. But it was something new.
- Q. Can you talk a little bit about your family background, the experiences that you had prior to coming to Ohio State? You've already done a little bit of that. You've talked about your sorority, dancing, cheerleading.
- A. When I came to Ohio State, I was a piano major my first two quarters. And I decided, "I don't want to teach piano." And I was taking modern dance as an elective. Helen Alkire was the head of the department and it was a new program. I think the University of Connecticut had a program, but Ohio State's was brand new. Helen was the emphasis behind the "movers and the shakers" and developing the program and instituting it to a major in the Physical Education Department at the University.
- Q. Was she a faculty member or dean?
- A. She became a faculty member. And I was in the second graduating class of dance majors.
- Q. Was that largely a female class?
- A. No, there was a young man in my class. We were required to do a senior dance project, and Cliff was in my project. Neat guy. Hard-working.
- Q. How did you pick Ohio State as your University? Or was there no picking to it?
- A. There was no picking to it all.
- Q. Such a production for the kids nowadays.
- A. My family worked very, very hard. My mother did start working and she loved it. She loved what she was doing. My father was an engineer with the Ohio Highway Department. He was a draftsman engineer. I'm happy that my mother loved what she was doing, just in the back of my mind, never anything said, they worked hard to give me, an

only child, everything. I took dance lessons, tap, ballet, piano. I took singing lessons, dramatic lessons, but it was all there, and they were so supportive.

Q. They must have loved the arts.

A. They did. They really, really did. My father was quite an artist. He had studied art at Carnegie Tech. My mother was a great seamstress and taught me so much. But she had a great eye for fashion and color. It was a great heritage really that I have inherited and enjoyed.

Q. What was life on the squad like? How much did you practice?

A. We had fun. There were some rules and regulations that were set down by the Dean of Women. We did not practice like they do now – we did not do stunts (not permitted). There were no competitions to prepare for.

Q. And did she supervise the guys, too?

A. No, that came through the Athletic Department. I can remember, after I was off of the squad and graduated, and I went through graduate school, I came back and helped a little bit. And I can remember approaching Dick Larkins and saying, “Women should be involved in this Varsity O project that’s going on for all of the athletes.” I like Dick and I think we got along very well, but he said, “If you want a Varsity O program, then you start it for women.” So I didn’t start it for women but it came about somehow. Not all that many years ago.

Q. So that would have been early ’50s.

A. Oh, yeah.

Q. In what ways do you generally identify yourself in terms of how others see you? You were a cheerleader, you were a woman, female, dancer or artist maybe.

- A. I think people recognized all of that. I think they see me as very organized. That's it. They recognize my strong points.
- Q. How was being female shaped your life?
- A. I saw that question and I thought, well how has it shaped my life? I don't know. I don't feel any different. I don't feel discriminated against. That makes me terribly naïve. But I don't. And I never really did from the male point of view.
- Q. It's probably a question for those that have. So it's not important for us to have an answer for every question here really. And do you think that being a woman shaped your experiences at Ohio State?
- A. I guess I would have to say no because it didn't occur to me. I was a doer. I was a helper. I just did it.
- Q. You had colleagues on the squad.
- A. Yes, and I had my sorority sisters who were very supportive. One little story that's kind of interesting that involves cheerleading and my sorority sisters.
- Q. What sorority were you in?
- A. Alpha Xi Delta. We had not been to the Rose Bowl for 21 years. It was 1950 and so we were going to the Rose Bowl. There was this incredible spirit and excitement. We did go but the band was soliciting money. They didn't have all that wonderful support that they have now. So they were going door to door, up sorority and fraternity row, soliciting and saying, "We want to go to the Rose Bowl, etc. etc." I can remember, I was told later, there was some ruse, you have a telephone call or whatever, and one of my sorority sisters presented to the meeting, "We've got a cheerleader in our midst. Let's send her."
- Q. So they lured you out of the room to make this pitch to your sisters.

- A. Yes, so my sorority sent me to the Rose Bowl.
- Q. So the cheerleaders didn't automatically go?
- A. No. My mother made the skirts for the girls. We had one outfit, and if it was cold, we just put on layers underneath our sweater. She knitted us mittens. It's different now.
- Q. It's a little different in terms of funding. How was that trip? Had you been to California before?
- A. Yes, we had. And my parents had very good friends out there and I stayed with them. They took me to the Rose Bowl parade. Not a part of it at all.
- Q. So you didn't cheer?
- A. Oh, I did. I did, oh yes. They said, "If you can get there, you're welcome on the sidelines." They sent the head cheerleader, the male. They sent him but not any of the rest of us.
- Q. Did anybody else get to go?
- A. A gal by the name of Sally Kuster was an alternate, and her father was Gordon Kuster, the photographer for The Columbus Dispatch. And he was going anyway. That was his assignment.
- Q. Was it the Dispatch then?
- A. Yes. His family was going, including Sally, who was an alternate cheerleader. We borrowed a uniform from one of the girls and she wore that and cheered with me.
- Q. So the two of you and the head guy.
- A. And the head guy.
- Q. Did we win?

- A. Yes, we did. Curly Morrison was the star, and was it Jimmy Hague who kicked the field goal? Amazing. It really was.
- Q. All right. So another one is about identities and I think we've kind of talked about that.
- A. I'm curious, you talk about units [in the list of questions].
- Q. This is probably for people that worked at OSU, so talking about your academic unit, if you were in Biology or you were in Nursing.
- A. Sure.
- Q. So after you graduated, you worked. Tell me about your life after you graduated. You went to grad school?
- A. I did and while I was in grad school I taught dance at Columbus School for Girls. And it was an elective program for the girls at that point in physical education. And I did like archery and the bowling and helped with that.
- Q. Archery with those pads right here at your elbow?
- A. Don't I wish we had those. That was great fun and I taught at CSG for four years. And my husband is an architect but he's in the family business. Architecture was the closest he could get to becoming a part of the family business, which is marble and granite. So anyway, he was also in ROTC, all of the boys were at that point in time. ROTC Army, Navy, Air Force.
- Q. So almost all OSU male students?
- A. Oh yes, and every Friday afternoon we had marching, Pass and Review on the Oval.
- Q. Women were not part of ROTC then I assume?
- A. Not at that time. But Pass and Review was wonderful.
- Q. Did most students turn out to watch that?

- A. Oh yes, it was great. Had a little band and they marched.
- Q. ROTC had a band?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Did they tend to be members of the OSU marching band or not? By then OSU marching band was all men, right?
- A. Oh yes. That was a great social activity, Pass and Review on Friday afternoon.
- Q. So much for happy hour, right?
- A. Yes.
- Q. Everybody got happy after the Pass and Review. You've talked a bit about the other women that you were on the squad with a little bit. Anything stand out in your mind about the other cheerleaders or stories about even your colleagues maybe in dance?
- A. We all just kind of seemed to get along and we did our thing, and then we went our separate ways.
- Q. Were there rivalries between sororities? It really was fairly collegial?
- A. You tried out, if you were in a sorority and you tried out and you made it, okay. That's great. My sorority didn't push, in other words. Oh, "Go try out." There wasn't that kind of recruiting going on.
- Q. Were most women in a sorority, percentage wise, do you think?
- A. I'm sorry, say that again.
- Q. Were most women in a sorority, do you think?
- A. Yes, I would say more than 50 percent. And then we had that lull for a while. I think it might be coming back somewhat.
- Q. Did you stay active?

- A. I did for a number of years. I went to graduate school.
- Q. Did you go in dance in grad school?
- A. No, I did not. Well yes, I take that back. For my Master's I took one girl and wrote about her as she progressed through the dance program that I was teaching.
- Q. She was an undergrad student?
- A. Yes. CSG.
- Q. Okay, I'm sorry.
- A. It was at CSG and I followed her.
- Q. Just kind of a case study?
- A. Exactly. And how it helped her, the impact it had. She was very, very shy and didn't socialize much with the other girls. They were all very accepting.
- Q. Just a little bit on the fringe.
- A. Yes, she was.
- Q. That's very good.
- A. So anyway, I did that. The ROTC boys were required to spend two years in the service. And Paul and I, we said we should have gotten overseas pay. We were in Selma, Alabama.
- Q. Had you married by then?
- A. Yes.
- Q. So when did you meet him?
- A. I met him probably early on in college, maybe sophomore or junior, but I didn't date him. I dated other boys in the fraternity that he was in. I was just always busy.
- Q. What fraternity was he in?

- A. SAE [Sigma Alpha Epsilon]. And then off we went to Selma and sat on our porch and watched the march go by.
- Q. Did you? What were your thoughts? Such a time of change.
- A. Right, exactly. There we were in Selma, part of it.
- Q. Was that '57? I'm trying to think here.
- A. Let's see. Paul graduated in, I had my Master's, so he graduated in '54, and then we went down to Selma and he had his two years. Then came back and went right into the family business. But he has kept his [membership in the American Institute of Architects] AIA up all this time.
- Q. So you're living in Selma. You're watching the south deal with massive changes in our country.
- A. Massive, massive. When we first went to Selma ...
- Q. Damn Yankees down there watching.
- A. Yes. When we first went to Selma, we did not have quarters on the base. So we lived in town for, I think it was three months, and we lived in the little house at the back of this big southern mansion.
- Q. So the old maid's quarters or something?
- A. Right. And our landlady was Mrs. Martindale and she was old-South charming. But she took me under her wing and she took me to the library and introduced me to the people at the library. And she invited me to some teas, to introduce me. She was really very, very nice to a Yankee. Then we moved on to base after that. We got officer's quarters.
- Q. And then came back to Columbus?

- A. Came back to Columbus. Our oldest daughter was born on the base in Selma. I can remember when she was applying for colleges, she applied to the University of Alabama and was accepted. Then when she decided on Ohio State, I wrote a letter and thanked them very much for their consideration, and got the most wonderful letter back that said, "We will keep her record on file for four years, and if she ever decides to come the University of Alabama, we will welcome her."
- Q. I think we do a lot of recruiting up here. My son is getting all of those mailings now.
- A. Ohio State was it for many of us. I just don't think in my crowd of high school friends, money might have been a problem.
- Q. The whole college search process is a lot different. My son will say that, "Where did you guys apply?" I say, "What are you talking about? Nothing wrong with Ohio State." Any other thoughts in general about sort of the climate of the University at that time? Or maybe the climate of the sorority.
- A. Sororities and fraternities were very, very strong. They really were. And my friends, they were movers and shakers. Mortar Board, they just did a lot. They got involved.
- Q. That was your experience.
- A. That's right. You go to the University and this is being offered and that is being offered, and you do it. You get involved.
- Q. Okay. Did you have any concerns or issues of equity or anything you look back on now and think, "Oh, it didn't feel like an issue at the time, but now that I think about it, maybe."

- A. I saw that question and I tried to think about it. And you know, Cindy, as I say, maybe I was just terribly naïve and in my own little world, but my experiences were always positive.
- Q. All right. How about, do you have a most powerful experience at OSU? Anything that stands out as, “Boy that really moved me in a new direction or really pushed me in the way I was already going?” Anything that was pivotal?
- A. I think cheerleading was definitely because it just opened up so many doors.
- Q. Such as?
- A. I met a lot of people. Because we would be invited to things.
- Q. In the community?
- A. In the community. And I can remember when television first came about, and going downtown to one of the hotels, there’s a big huge screen, and they were watching the football game. It was an event. And I don’t know whether, you’re too young to remember the Philip Morris boy.
- Q. I remember Captain Kangaroo. Howdy Doody, my early TV memories, black and white.
- A. Pre-Captain. This was Johnny and Johnny was the Philip Morris boy, man, whatever.
- Q. Did that mean smoking?
- A. Oh yes, oh yes. My mother was so excited. She said, “You’re going to meet Johnny Morris. He’s so cute.” We all remember the advertisement. And so let me touch you, you met Johnny.
- Q. Oh my gosh. So the attitude about smoking was certainly different?
- A. Oh my gosh, yes.

- Q. Did you personally work to effect any institutional change around equity issues? You're a little bit before things were framed that way. That's part of the challenge here.
- A. Absolutely. I mean, I never felt at any point in time in my college career, that because I was female I was shunned, not allowed. I was respected for my organizational skills, innovative ideas as I served on committees that touched on change.
- Q. Or disadvantaged.
- A. No, I think that all came about so much later.
- Q. The '60s probably, that second women's movement.
- A. I just didn't experience that. Even when I was working on my Ph.D., I didn't feel that.
- Q. What about things that weren't necessarily gender issues? Were there other things that students were seeking to have the University change during your years here, that there was sort of student action or student rallying around issues?
- A. I am sure there were. Nothing really stands out.
- Q. Either when you left the University or at this point, what remains undone in terms of progress for women or other diverse groups?
- A. You know what? I think women are doing very well. I really do. It is very encouraging to see the number of women CEO's in the listings of Forbes and Fortune 500. Women are becoming Deans at the University and commanding high-level positions. I think we need more women in administrative positions, i.e., University President.
- Q. I'm trying to think about other fields and really arts and dance. I don't know. You know more than I do about inequality.

- A. Dance for men has become okay. Back then, I was always kind of protective of Cliff, not outwardly so, but if someone would at some point in time, make a comment about him, I would feel very protective. I really would. Gosh, now.
- Q. But nobody tap dances anymore. That's what my grandma used to say, "Nobody taps dances anymore."
- A. Tell grandma that I have been tap dancing. The senior citizen center, where I go for line dancing, has offered tap dancing. So I've done the tap dancing and I've gone down to Ballet Met to do the tap dancing. And what was so funny, I remember down on Grandview Avenue, that ballroom, ballroom dancing, two of my friends, we were down there taking these tap lessons. And he's tapping away and he says, "Now hop." And I say, "Hop, are you kidding me? I can barely walk let alone hop."
- Q. I haven't seen tap dancing there. I love to go by and watch them ballroom dancing. But I've not seen that.
- A. Tap dancing, yes, and Ballet Met. I've had a knee replacement and another knee that should be but I'm saying, "I don't think so." And I've had the shoulder replaced.
- Q. You look great. Other topics or anything else that we ought to capture in terms of memories of what life was like for a student then?
- A. I told you, that one particular memory about my sorority sisters saying, "Hey, we have a cheerleader. We're going to help her. We don't need to help the band. The band will make it somehow." And I think at one point Chevrolet did come through and make up the rest of the money to get the band out there.
- Q. Was that a local dealership you think that did that?
- A. I don't know. I don't know.

- Q. It's a whole different scenario now. I think the University probably thinks more proactively about what it takes to fund some of these initiatives and student activity fees.
- A. The networking is so much different from what it was. I mean, look at your staff. And situations. The Alumni Association, the Athletic Association, the networking that's going on. Recruiting for the Medical Center. I know more about that now and I pay more attention to it now. Maybe it was going on but we were kids. I was doing what I was happy doing.
- Q. What did you do for your Ph.D.? What was your area of study?
- A. Really, Guidance and Counseling, because I was a guidance counselor in the Upper Arlington School System.
- Q. I didn't know that.
- A. I took early retirement after about 23 years, because I had opened a travel agency in the Short North. I had been recruited, as many teachers and counselors all over the country were, by these educational travel programs. It involved escorting students to Europe on spring break or in summer. And I thought that I should know a little bit more about the ins and outs of the travel industry. What are they saying to me when I have a question about airlines and ETA's, estimated times of arrival, and how to negotiate maybe with the manager of a hotel or whatever, if something happens. So I took a travel course.
- Q. When did you do that?
- A. That had to be in the '80s.
- Q. Where did you take the class?
- A. And I took the class at Arlington Travel. The young man who taught that class was very, very good. He was part-time at Arlington Travel and part-time with Delta as a counter

agent. And I said to him one time, “Have you ever thought about opening your own travel agency?” And he said, “Funny, I have been doing the paperwork to try to put that together.” And I said, “Okay, you be the manager and I’ll be the money behind it.” So we opened this agency in the Short North, and we were one of the first businesses in the short north as it began to revitalize and renew itself.

Q. What’s the name?

A. It was the Village Travel House.

Q. How long did you do that?

A. We were there for ten years. And then I lost my manager who was just my right arm, because the gentleman that I started the business with had an opportunity to go back with Delta. And I said, “You’ve always loved Delta. Go. We’ll manage.” And when he was leaving for another position in an entirely different business, I said I’m out of here. And this was at the time when things were changing. The airlines were not offering commissions anymore, and I thought, “This is a good time.” So I had two colleagues that I really respected in the travel business and I approached them and I said, “I would like to merge if possible, or maybe a buy-out, but merger would be great because I’m not ready to get out of the business yet.” So I became a partner in Northwest Travel which was in Muirfield and continued doing that. And in that process, I found a niche, which is good. And it happened to be Italy. And the background that was, of course, my husband’s business.

Q. Because of the marble and granite.

A. Yes, so it all just kind of melded together. I was at the right place at the right time.

Q. You’re sensitive to the opportunities? You were aware.

- A. I was aware. And I was asked by the Italian Tourist Board in Rome to do some consulting work for them. I went to these huge, huge meetings. I was the only travel agent from the United States. Me and a photographer.
- Q. How is your Italian?
- A. Good.
- Q. Okay. Where did you learn Italian?
- A. Well, when I was a counselor I went every day on my lunch hour over to the University and started with 101 Italian.
- Q. Oh my gosh. So you were a continuing ed student too? Undergrad, Master's, Ph.D., and continuing ed?
- A. Yes. And so that's what I did. And then one summer, I lived in Florence, and took Italian and Art History. And I told my husband, "I walked in the door and said hello," and she said, "Buon Giorno." And that was it. I didn't hear any English after that.
- Q. It was in Florence, you mean?
- A. Yes. Everything was. If you didn't understand something, you asked about it, and then she would explain it again in Italian.
- Q. But slower.
- A. But slower.
- Q. So you really were on your toes. When was this, this period of time?
- A. That is while I still had my agency in the Short North, so it had to start probably in the late '80s. Then the merger going into the '90s and taking off to do those things. And at these conferences you'd sit at a little table and they had the American flag there and they had my name.

- Q. Like a UN forum.
- A. It was. You filled out a form. I was interested in only boutique hotels, small hotels, and I was not into the big incentive. You do this, sell that many cars, and we're going to send you to wherever. No. That was not my thing. It was a small group, small hotels. So those people came to me, whereas maybe other people down the line got the others.
- Q. You'd go check them out and see the quality?
- A. Yes, exactly. And they would come to me and they would be promoting their hotel, their restaurant, whatever. And doing this I was in almost every region in Italy, and in a lot of the islands.
- Q. What fun.
- A. Yes. Went to a spa thing on the island of Ischia.
- Q. I don't know where that is.
- A. In Rocchetta. And Sardinia, and we were wine and dined by the mayors of these little villages. It was economic development, tourist promotion.
- Q. Did every country do that?
- A. I have no idea because I was just doing Italy.
- Q. And how did you get linked up with that again?
- A. I was doing a lot of work with clients going to Italy. And the Chicago Tourist Board. The Italian Tourist Board in Chicago was aware of that, because I might call and ask questions.
- Q. They got to know you.
- A. Yes, or I called and would say, "What about this region? Or could you please send me some maps?" And I have a cousin in Chicago that I would visit at least once or twice a

year. I'd always stop by the office and they'd give me materials. When the Tourist Board in Rome put these things together, it was the Chicago office that would say, "She needs to go. Her expertise is Italy." And I'd been there. I had traveled with blueprints under my arms, met Paul's agent and went up to the quarries, and did my thing. And through all of this, I was Sarah Smith and I was accepted. I didn't feel intimidated.

Q. Fabulous, fabulous. All right, let's see here.

A. I don't know whether this makes sense or not but the only time I really felt, "What's he talking about?" and got my back up, was when I was in the Short North and my landlord would stop by and he would never ask to talk to me. He would always say, "When will your husband be available?" And I looked at him and I said, "Who do you think is fronting this operation? I'm running this business. He's got his own. Talk to me."

Q. Interesting. Do you have any memorabilia that the Archives ought to copy?

A. Oh, I've got some pictures and I probably have a sweater. That's it. You're welcome to it, if I can find it.

Q. So note to whoever is doing this transcription. If that would be of interest, they can make contact with you.

A. Sure.

Q. Are there other people you think that ought to be interviewed for this project that you know of?

A. I'm trying to think.

Q. Do you feel like you had a mentor when you were at OSU in undergrad? Maybe at Master's and Ph.D. level you get more.

A. Ph.D. level I really did feel that I had a mentor.

- Q. Who was that?
- A. I'm trying to think of his name. Herman Peters was in Guidance and Counseling. But my Ph.D., you had asked me about, that was when I took the Ohio Interest Test, the kids in Upper Arlington took it in 8th grade and they took it again in 12th grade.
- Q. Was it a vocational interest test?
- A. Yes. And the premise was, for my Ph.D., that if they decided they wanted to be a fireman in the 8th grade, and then in the 10th grade, they changed it to doctor, there were three categories. They remained in that same category of helping, they didn't go someplace else where they would be sequestered like doing research or whatever. It was actively helping people. So tracking their interest.
- Q. And you could get the data in the old days probably. I don't know if you can get it now.
- A. Yes. It's on file somewhere.
- Q. Is that right?
- A. They keep all the Ph.D. dissertations.
- Q. Would you be willing to interview one or two women for this project? Would you like to do that?
- A. I don't think so.
- Q. Oh, okay. Anything else we ought to include?
- A. I don't think so. I think that the culmination of hard work and being involved with the University, volunteering, being a judge at cheerleading, helping with the 60+ program, and so forth and so on, I think the thing that really affected me most was when my two daughters, unbeknownst to me, recommended me for the [alumni association's Ralph Davenport] Mershon Award. I knew nothing about this. But you know, you raise your

children, you cry with them, you support them, you criticize them, nobody else can, but momma can, and to have them think that their mother was worthy of this award.

Q. So talk about that award a little bit. What does it recognize?

A. The Mershon Award recognizes an alumnus who has given back to the University volunteering, becoming active, in many phases of the University life.

Q. And they cited your involvement in going back and helping with cheerleading, probably alumni activities?

A. Yes, and my volunteering for various and sundry things.

Q. Tell me about your daughters a little bit.

A. My daughters are very compassionate, very caring, have wonderful children, they really do.

Q. Your grandchildren.

A. Yes.

Q. You're a grandma.

A. Yes. And we've been supportive of what the girls have done and what the grandchildren are doing. But the girls, Leslie, I kind of liken to me. She's our oldest. She's a mover and a shaker and a joiner and a doer. Stephanie is more like her dad. I'll stand here and I will support whatever you decide to do; however, I'm not going to get involved but I'm going to be in the background helping. And that's Stephanie. She had opportunities to join Childhood League, Pleasure Guild, whatever. And she said, "No, that's not for me."

Q. Some people are joiners and some are more independent.

A. Right. And Paul is not a joiner. He's not the kind of person who goes out and all of a sudden he just disappears and he's networking with all of these people, no.

- Q. He's taking care of business.
- A. That's exactly right. And of me. You know, he has supported me all along. We've been married 63 years.
- Q. Congratulations. That's fabulous.
- A. Isn't that amazing?
- Q. Yes, it is wonderful. When did you get married? What's your anniversary?
- A. Anniversary is June 27. And you know, it's just, "Well, Sarah, if you want to do that, go right ahead."
- Q. Pretty empowering, isn't it? To have that kind of support.
- A. Yes.
- Q. And it sounds like really at the University you found that in a lot of places.
- A. I did, I found so much support from my sorority sisters and just other people. And yes, I'm very happy with what I did. And I probably would do it again. I think's that the measure of how happy you were doing that. If you feel like, I'd do that again, then it was positive.
- Q. Good decision making. I have a sense that you see the positive in a lot of places too.
- A. You've got to. You have to. Life's too short. And it's funny, Paul and I are going to Italy in May, and we're taking grandson Thomas.
- Q. Oh, what fun.
- A. We took him last May and he had such a wonderful time. So when I approached him this time, I said, "Thomas, this is not going to be a fancy-dancy vacation like it was last time. You're going to schlep luggage." He said, "That's okay."
- Q. Sign me up. In Italy, let me schlep in Italy.

- A. I had taken the three granddaughters and I had taken them to Paris. And when we asked Thomas, he was 20, if he would like to go to Italy, he confided in his mother, "You know, I wasn't sure whether grandma and grandpa were ever going to take me to Italy."
- Q. That will be great fun, won't it?
- A. Yes. A young couple, our children's age, have been traveling with us now for about eight years.
- Q. Just friends?
- A. We became friends. We were on an OSU trip to the Cinque Terre and I can remember Debbie Vargo saying, "You ought to go on this, Sarah, and let us know what it was like." So I said, "Okay," because we were going to be going onto Florence and Rome anyway. So we said, "Okay, this will just be the pre-trip." After about the first day, this young couple came up to us and they said, "Do you mind if we follow you around?" And I said, "I don't care. Sure, if you want to do what we do." And they said, "You seem to know what you're doing and you speak the language." And I said, "Yes." So that was the first. And that was in May, and then we went back together in September. And then the following May, and so it was been May ever since.
- Q. Wonderful. How many years now?
- A. Eight. This young couple.
- Q. And that started out as an OSU trip?
- A. Right. And I said to them this year, "You know, Paul and I are getting much slower. That's not a bad thing. It's a good thing because we are seeing things that we zoomed by before. It's great." And they said, "That's okay." Because they've been with us enough.

I've introduced them to enough people, to enough regions, etc., that if they wanted to go off on their own while Paul and I sat at a café, they could do it.

Q. What other OSU trips have you taken?

A. I have taken quite a few. Some by myself. I've done the Cotswolds, I've done Normandy. Paul did go with me to Normandy. I've done several.

Q. That's a good experience. Another OSU connection. You have a lot of them.

A. Yes, I guess I do.

Q. That's good.

A. I guess I do.

Q. All right, I very much appreciate getting the chance to speak with you and to hear your story. And thank you for being so wonderful in sharing all your thoughts and experiences.

A. I have one more little story to tell you.

Q. All right, good.

A. And that is, when I was in this class, Italian class in Florence, there was a nun in my class and we were the oldest ones there. There were two young people, male/female, opera singers, who were there to get the proper pronunciation.

Q. Where were they from? From the U.S.?

A. Yes, somewhere in the states.

Q. Was the nun from the U.S. as well?

A. No. She was not. She had been with her order in Japan and they had reassigned her to Rome. So on the way to Rome, she came to Florence to brush up on her Italian.

Q. They don't speak Latin anymore.

A. So anyway, it kind of ended up that if we would go to lunch, we would kind of sit next to each other. And there were a couple times I walked with her back to her convent. And we just kind of bonded. She was just a lovely, lovely person. Well, I'm trying to think, in 1986, that's when we did this, I got a lovely letter from her when we got home, thanking me for being such a good friend and so forth and so on. And I didn't write back or anything. We just didn't communicate. It was just a thank-you note. Well, when Paul and I, we had been in Italy a year ago this May, we were there in September, just the two of us, and I had told our friends, "I'd love for you to go, but this is a catch-up on people." And I had her address. My friends at the hotel said, "Just take a taxi and go. Don't call. Just go." So the cab driver got us to this address at that convent and it didn't look like anything was going on. And one of the doors was locked and the cab driver said, "Are you sure you want me to leave you?" And we said, "Yes, we'll just scout around." Well we found a door.

Q. So Paul went with you?

A. Yes. We found a door that was open. I went in and I said to this person, "I'm looking for Sister Marie Paul." And she said, "Is she French?" And I said, "I don't know." She said, "I know who Sister Marie Paul is." And she took us into this lovely little room and sat us down at a table. Pretty soon in walked this nun and she said, "I'm Sister Marie Paul." And I said, "And I'm Sarah." And we both got tears in our eyes and Paul got very emotional.

Q. All those years.

A. Yes. We connected. And we spent about two hours together. She took us in their little cafeteria area and got us Cappuccino. I did write to her and I haven't heard from her and

I'm a little concerned. So when we got back in May, I'm going to try to reach her again. But she's speaks Japanese, French, Italian and English. And she wasn't very well. She said, "I have been having a lot of trouble with my stomach." And when I didn't hear from her, I really want to see what's going on when we get there in May.

Q. Such an incredible life. Such wonderful experiences.

A. I couldn't believe it. Such a dear lady. "I'm Sister Marie Paul."

Q. She recognized you when you said, "I'm Sarah."

A. Absolutely, because we were close.